

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 CIEP-02

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SCI-06 SP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00 EUR-25 DRC-01 /170 W

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FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1591

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUBUMBASHI 0356

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EMIN, CG, US

SUBJECT: COLLABORATIVE VENTURE BETWEEN ESSO EASTERN AND GECAMINES

REF: STATE 131490

1. GECAMINES DIRGEN UMBA COMPLETED STUDY OF ESSO-EASTERN PROPOSALS IN LATE JUNE AND ON JULY 1 SENT LETTER TO FROST OUTLINING GECAMINES' COUNTER-PROPOSALS. IF ESSO PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN JOINT VENTURE WITHIN GECAMINES CONCESSION, CONSULATE BELIEVES IT UNWISE TO RAISE QUESTION OF MINING POSSIBILITIES OUTSIDE SHABA AT THIS TIME. INTRODUCTION OF SECONDARY INTERESTS LIKELY TO COMPLICATE, OBSCURE, AND DELAY AGREEMENT FOR EXPLOITATION OF URANIUM IN SHABA.

2. BELIEVE FROST CONCERN ABOUT NOT TOUCHINGBASE WITH PRESIDENCY SINCE LAST YEAR LARGELY UNFOUNDED. ACCORDING TO UMBA, PRESIDENCY HAS RECEIVED COPIES OF ALL CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GECAMINES AND ESSO EASTERN IN ADDITION TO PERIODIC PROGRESS REPORTS. UMBA WHO APPEARS TO ENJOY FULLEST CONFIDENCE OF GOZ, CONTINUES TO FEEL STRONGLY THAT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN TWO COMPNAIES SHOULD BE COMPLETED BEFORE JOINTLY PRESENTING GOZ WITH DEFINITE PROPOSITION. ANY ESSO APPROACH TO BISENGIMANA AT THIS TIME LIKELY TO BE RE-
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3. IN LARGE CONTEXT, IT INCREASINGLY APPEARS THAT GECAMINES IS VIEWED (AND VIEWS ITSELF) AS ONE OF FEW QUASI-GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES UPON WHICH GOZ CAN DEPEND. GECAMINES HAS ASSUMED GROWING RESPONSIBILITIES BEYOND MINING, INCLUDING EVEN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE LOCAL PUBLIC HOSPITAL. ESPECIALLY SINCE APPOINTMENT OF ZAIRIAN AS HEAD OF COMPANY, ANY IDEOLOGICAL CLEAVAGES BETWEEN GECAMINES AND GOZ APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN NEARLY ELIMINATED. ALTHOUGH CONFLICTS WITH BELGIAN ELEMENTS WITHIN COMPANY CONTINUE, UMBA VERY DEFINITELY SEES HIMSELF AS MOBUTU'S MAN IN GECAMINES.

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